

STATE OF VERMONT
PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD

Docket No. 7453

Joint Petition of Vermont Electric Power Company,)
Inc. ("VELCO"), Vermont Transco LLC, Green)
Mountain Power Corporation, and Vermont Electric)
Cooperative, Inc. ("VEC"), for a Certificate of Public)
Good, pursuant to 30 V.S.A. Section 248,)
authorizing the upgrade of VELCO's Tafts Corners)
substation and the removal of VEC's existing)
substation located near the intersection of Route 2A)
and Old Creamery Road in the Town of Williston,)
Vermont)

Order entered: 3/11/2010

HEARING OFFICER REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION

On July 18, 2008, Vermont Electric Power Company, Inc. ("VELCO"), Vermont Transco LLC, Green Mountain Power Corporation ("GMP") and Vermont Electric Cooperative, Inc. ("VEC") (collectively "the Joint Petitioners") jointly petitioned the Vermont Public Service Board (the "Board") for a certificate of public good ("CPG") pursuant to 30 V.S.A. § 248(j) authorizing the upgrade of VELCO's Tafts Corners substation (the "Project") located near the intersection of Route 2A and Old Creamery Road in the Town of Williston, Vermont.¹

On January 9, 2009, the Board issued an Order approving the requested CPG. In that Order, the Board conditioned its approval of the CPG upon the following requirements:

3. [VELCO] shall execute the plant replacement and vegetation maintenance measures set forth in exh. VELCO-Boyle-5.²

1. On August 11, 2008, the Joint Petitioners were advised that their petition would receive a full § 248 review, as opposed to the more limited § 248(j) review that the Joint Petitioners had originally requested in their petition.

2. Docket 7453, Order of 1/7/09 at 32 (Condition 3).

4. Within 30 days of completion of construction of the Project, VELCO shall arrange a site visit with the Board and all parties to review whether there is a need to install additional aesthetic mitigation measures for the Tafts Corners Substation ("Substation") due to construction of the Project. Based on this inspection, the Board expressly reserves the right, after notice and opportunity for an evidentiary hearing, to require the installation of additional aesthetic mitigation measures for this Substation if it deems them to be warranted.³

On September 11, 2009, VELCO advised the Board that construction on the Project was complete. On November 9, 2009, the parties were advised that I would conduct the site visit contemplated under the terms of the CPG.

On November 17, 2009, I conducted the site visit and subsequently orally reported my observations to the Board. I reported that: (1) VELCO has executed the plant replacement and vegetation maintenance measures as required by the CPG; (2) VELCO otherwise has not undertaken any additional aesthetic mitigation measures to improve the harmony of the Project with its surroundings, notwithstanding the evidentiary finding in the Order that one possible aesthetic improvement would be to move the existing vegetation screen on the berm toward Interstate 89 to a lower elevation, which would allow the vegetation to grow higher, thereby providing additional screening for the increased mass of the Substation without running afoul of line clearance restrictions;⁴ and (3) the site visit did not suggest any immediately perceptible grounds for requiring VELCO to implement any additional aesthetic mitigation measures such as moving the existing vegetation screen.

In sum, based on what I observed at the site visit as reported above to the Board, I recommend that the Board conclude that no additional aesthetic measures are warranted for the Substation at this time.

3. *Id.* at 33 (Condition 4).

4. *Id.* at 23, finding #111.

Because neither my report nor my recommendation is adverse to any of the parties, I have not circulated this Report and Recommendation for comment pursuant to 3 V.S.A. 811.

Dated at Montpelier, Vermont, this 10th day of March, 2010.

s/ June Tierney
June Tierney, Esq., Hearing Officer

BOARD DISCUSSION

Although the appearance of the Substation's site is unpleasant to the eye, based on the Hearing Officer's Report and Recommendation, we perceive no reasonable additional aesthetic mitigation measures to be taken at this time.

BOARD ORDER

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED, ADJUDGED AND DECREED by the Public Service Board of the State of Vermont that:

1. The Hearing Officer's Report and Recommendation is accepted.

Dated at Montpelier, Vermont, this 12th day of March, 2010.

<u>s/ James Volz</u>)	
)	PUBLIC SERVICE
)	
<u>s/ David C. Coen</u>)	BOARD
)	
)	OF VERMONT
<u>s/ John D. Burke</u>)	

OFFICE OF THE CLERK

FILED: March 12, 2010

ATTEST: s/ Susan M. Hudson

Clerk of the Board

NOTICE TO READERS: This decision is subject to revision of technical errors. Readers are requested to notify the Clerk of the Board (by e-mail, telephone, or in writing) of any apparent errors, in order that any necessary corrections may be made. (E-mail address: psb.clerk@state.vt.us)